[SALVADOR]

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829 *563 • 156 On the whole, the Blacks speak with calmness, and, even when they are very reserved toward the investigator, they show a certain psychological assurance and a good adjustment to the conditions of life in Bahia. Here, too, there are obviously exceptions: one man practicing a liberal profession and who is thought to have had worries because of his color, proves reticent and even reserved. "He feels inferior because of the fact that he is black," other Blacks say; "for this reason he frequently causes trouble." The informants state that there are mulattoes who, wishing to conceal their origin, avoid appearing in the company of their own parents of black color. One young man practicing a liberal [593] profession, highly esteemed, is covered with praise because he does not have such prejudices; although married to a White, he goes everywhere with his mother, a Black of the most beautiful black, and introduces her to all his friends. On the other hand, another man of the same milieu and the same "quality" is criticized, because, according to some, "he does not wish to be black and for that reason he hides his old mother." Another Black is regarded as full of prejudice and as a racist, "because he prefers to go around with the Whites and he likes to appear in public with women whiter of complexion than of reputation." Some of his colleagues of the same profession and the same social rank regard him as one "repressed," one who is ashamed of being black. "And," it is added, "there are many like him, who, if they could, would be white!"

829 *563 576 There is no doubt but that certain Whites, including light and dark mulattoes, treat the Blacks and colored persons of humble social class with a certain air of superiority. They do so more rarely with individuals of the same rank as they. To say to someone's face that he is inferior because of his color would be a serious offense, according to the etiquette that governs the relations be- [671] tween individuals of different types in Bahia. A moreno educator, native of a northern State, says that during the nine years that he lived in Bahia he was able to observe this mutual respect between persons of different "qualities," provided they were of the same social rank, while in his State colored people are treated with contempt.

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829 *563 565 •156 contempt. In the highest strata of Bahia society, our informants say, a colored person generally does not suffer humiliations. It may even be that he is recognized as belonging to the most respected groups. A very dark Black practicing a liberal profession is irritated because in the organization where he works many people who do not know him take him for an office boy or an employee of inferior category. A female official, /Figs. 3 and 4 appear here/ /33/ on the contrary, says that she and her family are fortunate and do not attribute any of their difficulties to the fact that they are dark mulattoes. "If I have never been able to pursue a career as I wished, it is because my father was poor and died young. For that reason I always say at home that we must not speak of certain things... Some people might believe that we suffer because of our color."

[562] Among girls, who are more accustomed to discrimination than men, the feeling of inferiority can take quite peculiar forms; thus, a university student claims not to be disgusted with her color, "but she would like to be less homely." Finally, while not acknowledging it, a black woman practicing a liberal profession let the same frustration complex show by saying that she was very discouraged, when she was young, to hear herself called "a pretty little Black."

829 *563 565 •571 An important aspect of the problem is created by the fact that the Blacks and the dark mulattoes of urban working circles, to the extent that they are aware of their civil and political rights, are less inhibited in their behavior in front of Whites. The latter feel resentment at the way in which "impudent Negroes" speak loudly in the street, pass in front of them, and do not yield them their place in the tramways and other means of transportation. These incidents take on an aggressive significance in the eyes of those who lay claim to being the dominant class by virtue of their physical or social appearance. In many cases the Blacks do not make use of their color as a distinctive sign of their group. An important mutual-aid association for Blacks has taken as its emblem two white hands held out to each other as a symbol of solidarity. In one of its reports this same organization personifies its own activity by a picture representing a white woman carrying a white child and two other white children with European features, who hold her embraced.

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*563 565 for many people, is more a question of class than a question of race, "the primacy of culture and of class" having the ascendancy, one may say with a mulatto educator that "if he has money, education, and manners, the Black can elevate himself." This synthesis, however, does not exhaust all the aspects of the problem. A very dark woman of liberal profession declares that "a Black, in order to elevate himself socially, must have talent and friendships." [571] In truth, good personal and family relationships are very important for everybody in Bahia, whether in trade, in administration, or in politics. A maxim constantly cited by Brazilians teaches that "a friend at hand is worth more than money in the till," which means that any enterprise is easier when the interested party is given a "personal" introduction by a friend of the person with whom he must deal. One informant insists on explaining that she does not believe money has a great influence on the social ascent of colored people; she knows several among them who, having previously made a fortune, did not succeed in elevating themselves. [156] "For in order to elevate oneself it is necessary not to have an inferiority complex. There are many Blacks who not only do not dare to approach Whites of a high class, but transmit this fear to their children." The fact that the black color recalls the ancient slaves is cited by many as an explanation for the difficulties that [562] [826] the darkest ones encounter in attaining a high rank. "Lately risen from the depths of slavery," writes a priest of mixed blood, "rare are the Negroes who succeed in reaching a high level or position. [571] As for mulattoes and morenos (who are not true Blacks), we can say that, from all points of view, they live in harmony with the Whites, at least here in Bahia." A doctor makes the same comment: "As far as the morenos are concerned, they have a position equivalent to that of the Whites; but it is not correct to say that the Blacks can easily attain the highest offices or positions of the first order in the most esteemed professions. As for mulattoes, one finds some of them in the positions that we have just named, without being able to deny, however, that for the métis whose color closely approaches that of the Negroes, this pigmentation of the skin creates obstacles to the various careers mentioned. On